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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/423,523	07/05/2000	KIYOTAKA ISHINO	ATOCM163	6838

7590 11/30/2001
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EXAMINER

SERGEANT, RABON A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1711

DATE MAILED: 11/30/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/423,523

Applicant(s)
Ishino et al.

Examiner
Rabon Sergeant

Art Unit
1711

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE three MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Feb 26, 2001
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 4-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

15) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____

18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____

19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

20) ☐ Other:

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1. Claims 4-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Within line 3 of claim 4, the language, "containing a polyether chains", is not grammatically correct.

2. Based on the disclosure at page 2 of the specification, it is questioned if applicants intended to claim "polyoxyethylene" instead of "polyoxyalkylene".

3. Claims 4-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

It is unclear if applicants' polymers may be polyethers lacking other structural or linking segments. For example, it is unclear if high molecular weight, exclusively polyether polymers can be used. Claims 7-9 seem to suggest that polymers containing only polyether segments may be used; however, such polymers are notorious for having poor physical properties and it is unlikely that such polymers would perform adequately in the given application. Furthermore, with respect to claim 9, polyoxyalkylenes having the claimed molecular weight are usually liquids; therefore, it is unclear if the claimed polymer is a polyoxyalkylene having the claimed molecular weight or if the language pertains to a polymer segment having the claimed molecular weight. Clarification is required.

Applicants' new claims 7-9 have caused this issue to now be raised.

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4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

5. Claims 4-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Flesher ('024) or Werenicz et al. ('887) or WO 96/15174, each in view of Pia ('951).

The primary references disclose the production of water vapor permeable films, but are silent regarding the use of the films as covers for compost heaps. As discussed within applicants' Background of the Invention, the use of covers over compost heaps to prevent undue interference from weather conditions has long been known. Furthermore, Pia discloses that the covers over compost (used to spawn mushrooms) can be tailored or modified to control such conditions as oxygen, carbon dioxide, and water contents or exchange rates. Therefore, in view of the art recognized need to both protect compost piles from the elements and to control the environment

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of the compost, the position is taken that it would have been obvious to utilize gas permeable films, such as those disclosed by the primary references, as protecting covers for compost heaps.

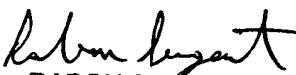
6. Applicants have argued that Pia is not relevant because the film disclosed in Pia possesses holes. In response, it is not seen that this argument is germane to the issues at hand, because applicants' claims do not exclude the presence of perforations within the films.

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to R. Sergent at telephone number (703) 308-2982.

R. Sergent/om
November 13, 2001


RABON SERGENT
PRIMARY EXAMINER